

## Calif. teacher pink slips: 23,000 and rising

Monday, March 15, 2010

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SACRAMENTO (KABC) -- Fallout from California's financial crisis is hitting school districts throughout the state. Thousands of pink slips have been mailed to teachers and other school employees, with more to come. Educators held a "pink-slip protest" Monday.

California's [Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell](#) points to the number of teachers and staff who have gotten pink slips as of Monday morning: nearly 22,000. By late afternoon, it had topped 23,000.

There could be more, because school districts still have until Monday night to meet the deadline. The layoff notices are in anticipation of yet another year of getting less money from the state.

"The schools today are operating on almost \$18 billion less than we had anticipated just two years ago," said O'Connell.

Members of the [California Education Coalition](#) delivered pink slips to lawmakers and even to Governor Schwarzenegger to protest the devastating cuts.

"I have to deal with the uncertainty and we still have to get up every morning and make sure that we do the best for our kids," said Katie Curry, a school principal.

Many of the layoffs won't be carried out. Last year, of the 26,000 layoff notices, 10,000 people were re-hired.

This year, though, the job losses may be far worse because federal stimulus money was only for one year.

"This year, we don't have anyone bailing us out and so the kids will lose some part of their education for next year," said Chuck Weis, Santa Clara County superintendent of schools.

While education funding formulas typically call for automatic increases, the Governor's Office says the state can't afford them this year.

"The governor's budget is about \$50 billion for education out of \$86 billion that we have," said Aaron McLearn, the governor's press secretary. "That's the same amount of money we gave education last year."

One of the last resorts to save teacher jobs is a bill before the state legislature that would allow counties to pass higher property taxes with just 55 percent of the vote, instead of two-thirds.

"Pasadena, like many districts, is going for a parcel tax. If we don't get the parcel tax, we can't rescind any of these," said Alice Petrossian, chief academic officer, Pasadena Unified School District.

While the deadline for handing out these preliminary layoff notices is Monday, March 15, the deadline to finalize the layoffs is May 15.

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